



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

in 1793, our misery had attained its zenith. We were cast almost naked, destitute of every thing, on the shores of North America, not by the fury of the waves, but by the violence and barbarity of man. If, as they fled from a land of desolation, imbrued in ruin and carnage, some few were provided with feeble resources to ward off the stroke of misery, they were robbed of their last hope by merciless English corsairs: few escaped their rapacity. Even women, and infants at the breast were stripped! How dreadful was our situation! But what did we not afterwards owe to an all gracious Providence! From the horrors of civil war, we suddenly passed to a state of profound peace. After such a dreadful tempest, the bright day of hospitality and plenty arose to cheer us in the land of our allies and friends.

The inhabitants of towns and cities immediately availed themselves of every resource their benevolence could suggest to aid and console our wretched families. There you beheld different civil and religious communities, there every class of citizens male and female, hasten to the sea-shore.

the medium of the advertisements she had published in a newspaper at New York, where she had taken refuge. Such reiterated shocks had so powerful an effect on me, that in Virginia I was seized with a very pernicious fever, which in the end, considerably injured my health.

on board the ships, into the houses, and bring every kind of assistance to our companions in misfortune.

The maritime towns which signalized their humanity, were principally, Norfolk in Virginia, where we found the greatest affluence; Baltimore, Charlestown, Philadelphia, Wilmington, New-York, and Boston. In some, considerable subscriptions were raised for the refugees; in others, they were furnished with lodging, and provisions for six months were allowed those who had neither trade nor profession.

Penetrated with gratitude for so many acts of beneficence, some among us having been enabled to parry the shafts of ill fortune, by their talents and laudable industry, wished to establish societies which might in the same manner succour other Frenchmen, whom similar misfortunes should induce to fly from the Antilles to these shores. We think our companions and successors may say to others in the words of Queen Dido: *Non ignara mali, miseris succurrere disco.* (*Æneid*, Book, i. v. 628—630.)

Oh! Americans! you who have granted me an asylum, and you generous Virginians, who during five years honoured me with your confidence, accept this feeble testimony of gratitude! May your hospitable shores long maintain peace, that invaluable blessing, which you now almost alone on earth enjoy!

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES OF DISTINGUISHED PERSONS.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF THOMAS CLARKSON, M. A. THE INTREPID ADVOCATE OF THE ABOLITION OF NEGRO SLAVERY.

(Continued from page 41.)

—“Man devotes his brother, and destroys;

And worse than all, and most to be deplor'd
As human nature's broadest, foulest blot,
Chains him, and tasks him, and exacts his
sweat
With stripes, that mercy with a bleeding
heart
Weeps when she sees inflicted on a beast.

What then is man? And what man seeing
 this,
 And having human feelings, does not blush,
 And hang his head, to think himself a man.
 I would not have a slave to till my ground,
 To carry me, or fan me while I sleep,
 And tremble when I wake, for all the
 wealth

That sinews bought and sold have ever
 earn'd.

No: dear as freedom is, and in my heart's
 Just estimation priz'd above all price,
 I had much rather be myself the slave,
 And wear the bonds, than fasten them on
 him." COWPER.

WHILE Mr. Clarkson had been laboriously employed, the committee on their part called the attention of the public to the great object which they had in view, and never perhaps at any former period did the people of England so generally concur in one generous feeling as they did now in crying out for the abolition of this infamous trade. Every where they found co-adjutors in their good work, and from all parts of the country petitions were sent up to Parliament, praying that the slave trade might be abolished. An order of council therefore was issued, February, 11, 1788, directing that a committee of privy council should sit as a board of trade, to take into consideration the present state of the African trade. Mr. Wilberforce was at the time seriously ill, and unable to take any measures upon this occasion. He therefore wrote to Clarkson, and requested him to repair to London immediately, where his first business was to have an interview with Mr. Pitt. Mr. Pitt had at this time little knowledge of the trade. He could not conceive how private interest should not always restrain the master of the slave from abusing him,—but such representations were made as induced him to believe that cruel practices were more probable than he imagined.

It was now necessary to be ready

with evidence for the privy council. There was one person who would be a host in himself, if he could be persuaded to come forward: this was Mr. Norris of Liverpool: he had been formerly a slave captain, but had quitted the trade and settled as a merchant in a different line of business; he had expressed to Clarkson his decided opinion of the impolicy, cruelty, and destructive nature of the traffic, and even dictated to him certain clauses, which he believed, if put into an act of parliament, would judiciously effect its abolition. Yet, upon inquiry it was found that this very Mr. Norris came to London as a Liverpool delegate in support of this very trade! and he gave evidence before the privy council in direct contradiction to all his former statements. This evidence, and that of the other Liverpool witnesses, which had been preconcerted, and consisted of exaggeration and artful misrepresentation, produced a greater effect.—The Liverpool merchants had succeeded in persuading some of the men in power that the trade was humane, and they now employed a clerk in a slave house, who had formerly been a Jesuit, to prove that it was perfectly consistent with christianity. Upon the cross-examination of these witnesses, however their statement did not appear quite so satisfactory, and fortunately just at this time the two Swedish travellers Spaarman and Wadstrom arrived in England from Africa, whether they had been sent on a scientific expedition. They readily consented to give their testimony before the privy council, and to produce their journals—and they affirmed, in utter refutation of the falsehoods which had been stated by the Liverpool deputies, that wars were entered upon wholly at the instigation of the white-traders, for the purpose of getting slaves, that the Africans lived in a fruitful and luxuriant country,

which supplied all their wants, and that they would be a happy people, if it were not for the existence of the slave trade, but that every enormity was practised in consequence of that trade.

At length the business came before Parliament, and Mr. Pitt moved that the petitions concerning the slave trade should be taken into consideration early in the next session. He studiously avoided giving any opinion upon the subject, but so many members rose, as if to give relief to their feelings, and 'acquit their own souls by bearing testimony against the trade, that it was believed the immediate abolition might have been carried, had it then been moved for. Mr. Clarkson observes, that this would have been highly imprudent as well as inconsistent, and that by entering into a patient discussion of the merits of the question, by bringing evidence upon it, by reasoning upon that evidence night after night, and year after year, and thus disputing the ground inch as it were by inch, the abolition now stands upon a rock which never can be shaken. What had appeared during this debate concerning the horrors of the middle passage led to an immediate interference in the trade. Sir William Dolben had been so much affected by the horrors of this transportation, which he conceived to be the worst in the long catalogue of evils belonging to the system, that he brought in a bill to limit the number of persons in proportion to the tonnage of the vessel which was to carry them. Even this was opposed by the Liverpool merchants and their worthy representatives, and their delegates were instructed to offer evidence against it. These delegates asserted that the proposed regulations were unnecessary, because the slaves had already sufficient room, sufficient air, and sufficient provi-

sions. When upon deck they made merry and amused themselves by dancing. As to the mortality upon the passage it was trifling, and in short *the voyage from Africa to the West Indies was one of the happiest periods of a negroe's life.*

When Mr. Clarkson was at Bristol he saw two sloops fitting out for Africa, the one of only 25 tons which was destined to carry 70 slaves, and the other of only 11, which was to carry 30.—though it had been built as a pleasure boat for the accommodation of six persons, upon the Severn. Of this vessel he procured the builder's measurement. The length of the room for the thirty slaves was twenty two feet. The greatest breadth of the floor was eight, and the least four. The whole length from the keel to the beam was but five feet eight inches; three feet of which were occupied by ballast, cargo, and provisions, so that two feet, eight inches remained only as the height between decks. Each slave therefore could have only four square feet to sit in. This was the trade which required no regulation! this was the sufficient room and sufficient air!—But when these witnesses came to be cross-examined, a melancholy account was extorted of *this happiest period of a negroe's life!* It was confessed by these Liverpool delegates, that every slave, whatever his size might be, had only five feet six inches in length, and sixteen inches in breadth to lie in: that the floor was covered with bodies packed according to this allowance: That between the floor and the deck there were often platforms or broad shelves in the midway which were covered with bodies also: that all the time they remained upon the coast, which was from six weeks to six months as it might happen, the men were chained two and two by the hands and the feet, and fastened also by means of

ringbolts to the deck : that they were fed twice a day, with yams and horse beans, and their allowance of water was one pint a day : that after meals they jumped up in their irons for exercise : this was so necessary for their health, that they were whipped if they refused to do it,—and this jumping was what the Liverpool witnesses called dancing : that some died of suffocation, and that the ordinary mortality on the windward coast was only about five in the hundred : upon an average of 35 voyages, an account of which was produced, it proved to be about six, the loss was still greater at Calabar and Bonny, which are the greatest markets for slaves, and this computation did not include those who died while the vessels were lying off the coast, nor after their arrival, of the disorders which they had contracted upon the passage ;—three and four in a hundred had been known to die in this latter case.

In producing evidence before the privy council the slave holders and slave traders had every possible advantage. The difficulty on the other hand which the friends of the Africans experienced, were greater than could have been supposed before the question proved how little real independence is to be found ; the whole strength of the planters was exerted, and all persons in any degree dependent upon them and their connections, were deterred from publicly declaring what they readily would affirm in private. And when in despite of every obstacle a respectable number of witnesses had been procured, the privy council had not time to hear half of them, though their enemies had been heard at length. Yet when the report was printed, the facts were so strong against the trade, the atrocities brought home to it were of so black a die, the guilt which it proved was so deep and damning, that every effort was used by the planters to set it aside, and

they succeeded in their demand of being allowed to bring counsel to the bar of the house, and introduce such witnesses as would throw farther light upon the propositions which Mr. Wilberforce had moved in the debate upon the report.

Their object was to gain time, that their system of alarm, cabal and misrepresentation, might do its work in the interim, and in this they succeeded.

In spite of all the eloquence of Burke, and Fox, and Pitt, who were equally sincere and equally ardent in this cause of humanity,* the question was lost as often as it was brought forward.

There is one point on which Mr. Clarkson has not spoken out. After speaking of the difficulty which was thrown in Mr. Pitt's way by an opposition from three of the most powerful members of the cabinet, he proceeds to say that "a difficulty still more insuperable, presented itself in an occurrence which took place in the year 1791, but which is much too delicate to be mentioned. The explanation of it

*It is more than doubtful whether Pitt was a sincere friend to the abolition of the slave trade. Montgomery, in his poem entitled "the West Indies," draws a fine distinction between the exertions of Pitt and Fox.

—"When Pitt, supreme among the senate,
rose

The Negroe's friend among the Negroe's
foes ;

Yet while his tones like Heaven's high thunder broke,

No fire descended to consume the yoke :

— When Fox, all eloquent for freedom,
stood

With speech resistless as the voice of blood,
The voice that cries thro' all the patriot's
veins,

When at his feet his country groans in
chains ;

Of power to bid the storm of passion roll,
Or touch with sweetest tenderness the soul ;
He spake in vain ;—till with his latest
breath,

He broke the spell of Africa in death."

however, would convince the reader that all the efforts of Mr. Pitt from that day were rendered useless. I mean as to bringing the question, as a minister of state, to a favourable issue." As Mr. Clarkson has forborne to notice the notorious predilection of the royal family for the African slave trade, it is to be inferred, that this occurrence, whatever it may have been, relates, to a certain high personage. By what unhappy influence he was blinded to the impolicy, and induced to favour the continuance, of this inhuman traffic we know not; but certain it is that had it not been for this circumstance, that traffic would have been abolished ten years earlier, and all the guilt and misery accumulated in consequence during those years would have been spared. At the commencement of this question the clergy had come forward as behoved them: but no sooner was the cry of jacobinism set up against the abolition, and the pleasure or rather displeasure of the crown known, than all the kissareii of the establishment slunk back.

One circumstance must be repeated here because it equally shows the indefatigable diligence of Mr. Clarkson, and the baseness of the slave trade party. There was a matter in dispute relative to the mode of obtaining slaves in the rivers of Calabar and Bonny. On the arrival of the ship, a fleet of canoes went up these rivers, each carrying from thirty to forty armed natives, and a four or six pounder at the bow, they were absent from eight to fourteen days, and usually brought back about a thousand slaves, bound hand and foot, and lying at the bottom of the canoes. The human flesh-dealers asserted that these slaves were fairly purchased at fairs in the interior, and that the reason why so large a body went to purchase them, and so formidably armed, was that they

had to pass through the territories of different petty princes, to each of whom they pay a toll—this toll has long been fixed, but attempts have frequently been made to raise it, and it was necessary to go well armed in order to resist any attempt at enforcing the exaction. This statement no person who knew the character of the slave trade and of its advocates could possibly believe. The abolitionists tried to throw light upon the subject by inquiring if these canoes went up laden with goods adequate to the purchase of so many slaves? they extorted sufficient evidence that this was impossible, still they could not prove what they knew must be the truth of the case.

"How then were we to decide this important question?" says Mr. Clarkson, "for it was said, that no white man was ever permitted by the natives to go up in these canoes. On mentioning accidentally the circumstances of the case, as I have now stated them, to a friend, immediately on my return from my last journey, he informed me, that he himself had been in company, about a year before, with a sailor, a very respectable-looking man, who had been up these rivers. He had spent half an hour with him at an inn. He described his person to me. But he knew nothing of his name, or of the place of his abode. All he knew was, that he was either going or that he belonged to, some ship of war in ordinary; but he could not tell at what port. I might depend upon all these circumstances, if the man had not deceived him; and he saw no reason why he should.

"I felt myself set on fire, as it were, by this intelligence, deficient as it was; and I determined instantly that I would, if it were possible, find him out. For if our suspicions were true, that the natives frequently were kidnapped in these

expeditions, it would be of great importance to the cause of the abolition to have them confirmed; for as many slaves come annually from these two rivers, as from all the coast of Africa besides. But how to proceed on so blind an errand was the question. I first thought of trying to trace the man by letter. But this might be tedious. The examinations were now going on rapidly. We should soon be called upon for evidence ourselves. Besides, I knew nothing of his name. I then thought it to be a more effectual way to apply to Sir Charles Middleton, as a comptroller of the navy, by whose permission I could board every ship of war in ordinary in England, and judge for myself. But here the undertaking seemed very arduous; and the time it would consume became an objection in this respect, that I thought I could not easily forgive myself, if I were to fail in it. My inclination, however, preponderated this way. At length I determined to follow it; for, on deliberate consideration, I found that I could not employ my time more advantageously to the cause; for as other witnesses must be found out somewhere, it was highly probable that, if I should fail in the discovery of this man, I should, by moving among such a number of sea-faring people, find others who would give their testimony in our favour.

"I must now inform the reader, that ships of war in ordinary, in one of which this man was reported to be, are those which are out of commission, and which are laid up in the different rivers and waters in the neighbourhood of the king's dock-yards. Every one of these has a boatswain, gunner, carpenter, and assistant on board. They lie usually in divisions of ten or twelve; and a master in the navy has a command over every division.

"At length I began my journey.

I boarded all the ships of war lying in ordinary at Deptford, and examined the different persons in each. From Deptford I proceeded to Woolwich, where I did the same. Thence I hastened to Chatham, and then down the Medway to Sheerness. I had now boarded above a hundred and sixty vessels of war. I had found out two good and willing evidences among them. But I could gain no intelligence of him, who was the object of my search.

"From Chatham, I made the best of my way to Portsmouth-harbour. A very formidable task presented itself here. But the master's boats were ready for me; and I continued my pursuit. On board the *Pegase*, on the second day, discovered a very respectable person in the gunner of that ship. His name was George Millar. He had been on board the *Canterbury* slave-ship at the dreadful massacre at Calabar. He was the only disinterested evidence living, of whom I had yet heard. He expressed his willingness to give his testimony, if his presence should be thought necessary in London. I then continued my pursuits for the remainder of the day. On the next day, I resumed and finished it for this quarter. I had now examined the different persons in more than a hundred vessels in this harbour, but I had not discovered the person I had gone to seek.

"Matters now began to look rather disheartening, I mean, as far as my grand object was concerned. There was but one other port left, and this was between two and three hundred miles distant. I determined however to go to Plymouth. I had already been more successful in this tour, with respect to obtaining general evidence, than in any other of the same length; and the probability was, that, as I should continue to move among the same kind of people, my success would

be in a similar proportion according to the number visited. These were great encouragements to me to proceed. At length I arrived at the place of my last hope. On my first day's expedition I boarded forty vessels, but found no one in these, who had been on the coast of Africa in the slave-trade. One or two had been there in king's ships; but they had never been on shore. Things were now drawing near to a close; and, notwithstanding my success as to general evidence in this journey, my heart began to beat. I was restless and uneasy during the night. The next morning, I felt agitated again between the alternate pressure of hope and fear; and in this state I entered my boat. The fifty-seventh vessel, which I boarded in this harbour, was the *Melampus* frigate. One person belonging to it, on examining him in the captain's cabin, said he had been two voyages to Africa; and I had not long discoursed with him, before I found, to my inexpressible joy, that he was the man. I found, too, that he unravelled the question in dispute precisely as our inferences had determined it. He had been two expeditions up the river Calabar in the canoes of the natives. In the first of these, they came within a certain distance of a village. They then concealed themselves under the bushes, which hung over the water from the banks. In this position they remained during day-light. But at night they went up to it armed; and seized all the inhabitants, who had not time to make their escape. They obtained forty-five persons in this manner. In the second they were out eight or nine days; when they made a similar attempt, and with nearly similar success. They seized men, women, and children, as they could find them in the huts. They then bound their arms, and drove them

before them to the canoes. The name of the person, thus discovered on board the *Melampus*, was Isaac Parker. On inquiring into his character from the master of the division, I found it highly respectable. I found also afterwards, that he had sailed with Captain Cook, with great credit to himself, round the world. It was also remarkable, that my brother on seeing him in London, when he went to deliver his evidence, recognised him as having served on board the *Monarch* man-of-war, and as one of the most exemplary men in that ship.

"I returned now in triumph, I had been out only three weeks, and I had found out this extraordinary person, and five respectable witnesses besides."

No evidence could be more decisive than this, and none was ever given more clearly, circumstantially, and unexceptionably. The plea set up against it was that the planters had produced persons in high life as witnesses, whereas the abolitionists had been obliged to take up with men of the lowest character, and their common seamen was contrasted with the Admirals on the other side of the question!! "It is the glory of the English law," says Mr. Clarkson, "that it has no scale of veracity which it adapts to persons according to the station which they may be found to occupy in life. In our courts of law the poor are heard as well as the rich, and if their reputation be fair, and they stand proof against the cross examinations they undergo, both the judge and jury must determine the matter in dispute by their evidence. But the house of commons were now called upon by our opponents to adopt the preposterous maxim of attaching falsehood to poverty, or of weighing truth by the standard of rank and riches."

No evidence availed, no eloquence, no demonstration could resist the artifices and influence of the party who were interested in the continuance of these enormities. In 1794, Clarkson retired from his labours with a constitution which seemed at the time to be utterly destroyed by his unremitting and unparalleled exertions.

"As far as I myself was concerned," says Mr. Clarkson, "all exertion was then over. The nervous system was almost shattered to pieces. Both my memory and hearing failed me. Sudden dizziness seized my head. A confused singing in the ears followed me, wherever I went. On going to bed the very stairs seemed to dance up and down under me, so that, misplacing my foot I sometimes fell. Talking, too, if it continued but half an hour, exhausted me, so that profuse perspirations followed; and the same effect was produced even by an active exertion of the mind for the like time. These disorders had been brought on by degrees in consequence of the severe labours necessarily attached to the promotion of the cause. For seven years I had a correspondence to maintain with four hundred persons with my own hand. I had some book or other annually to write in behalf of the cause. In this time I had travelled more than thirty-five thousand miles in search of evidence, and a great part of these journeys in the night. All this time my mind had been on the stretch; it had been bent to this one subject; for I had not even leisure to attend to my own concerns. The various instances of barbarity, which had come successively to my knowledge within this period, had vexed, harassed, and afflicted it. The wound, which these had produced, was rendered still deeper by those cruel disappointments before related, which arose from the reiter-

ated refusal of persons to give their testimony, after I had travelled hundreds of miles in quest of them. But the severest stroke was that inflicted by the persecution, begun and pursued by persons interested in the continuance of the trade, of such witnesses as had been examined against them, and whom, on account of their dependent situation in life, it was most easy to oppress. As I had been the means of bringing these forward on these occasions, they naturally came to me, when thus persecuted, as the author of their miseries and their ruin. From their supplications and wants it would have been ungenerous and ungrateful to have fled. These different circumstances, by acting together, had at length brought me into the situation just mentioned; and I was therefore obliged, though very reluctantly, to be borne out of the field, where I had placed the great honour and glory of my life."

The trade went on, motion after motion was made without any immediate effect: meantime the West Indian merchants began to find that they had complaints; that the arguments adduced by their adversaries on the score of policy were but too true, and that it was their interest especially after the cession of Trinidad, to have the trade abolished. That ministry came into power, which will always be remembered with respect and gratitude for having destroyed this traffic abroad, and introduced the system of limited service into the army at home. Mr. Fox did not live to see this great measure of the abolition accomplished, but it was one of the last acts of his public life to pledge the house of commons to take effectual measures for it: the honour of effecting it was reserved for Lord Grenville,—never has it fallen to the lot of any statesman before him to con-

fer so great a benefit upon mankind. Through life, and in the hour of death, this will be his consolation and his joy ; and by this he will be remembered, and for this he will be blest, long after all other actions of his political career shall be regarded with indifference, or be forgotten.

To Thomas Clarkson as the prime

mover of this important question, England and Africa are indebted for the deliverance from this enormous evil. Never let man despair of bringing virtuous undertakings to an happy end, however inadequate the means may appear wherewith it is commenced.

DETACHED ANECDOTES.

OPPOSITION TO CHANGE.

BENTHAM, in his theory of rewards and punishments, relates, that "in the reigns which preceded that of Catherine 2d, neither sex nor rank was exempted from the whip and the knout. Peter the First, it is well known, caused ladies of the first rank to be chastised in this manner; and the laws in that country remain to this day the same, though their application has been very much limited." Such is the dislike to the allowing of any change, how much so ever it may be for the better, and such is the pertinacity with which an adherence to old practices is supported, and such are the objections, whether weak or well founded, which are always ready to be produced whenever mention is made of a proposed alteration, that it may be readily supposed if any reformer in that country, would propose a revision of these laws, there would be a general outcry, that "this is not a proper time," and doubtless the Chief Justice and Judges of Russia would oppose the attempt. Yet when favourable circumstances have concurred to permit a change to take place, the vehement opposers of innovations not unfrequently soon settle down in quiet acquiescence to the new order of things. Thus we have lately seen in the case of the

abolition of the slave-trade, that now since that abominable traffic has been stopped by an act of the legislature, the *Indifferents*, of whom after all, the great body of the nation is composed, have without reluctance submitted to the change. Thus it may be hoped, that the emancipation of Catholics, that urgent and imperative act of justice, may at no very distant period be carried, and then its opposers will soon find that the dread of innovation has only magnified their fears, and that none of the dreaded evils will follow from the removal of penal restrictions, any more than have followed from the corrections of other abuses, when the laws which have unwisely sanctioned them, have been judiciously repealed. K.

NONCHALANCE.

After a shock of an earthquake at Messina, which however was slight, on approaching a carriage to condole with a lady,—“Is it not shocking,” she replied, “It is indeed very shocking.—*You were not at the opera.*”

Vaughan's View of Sicily.

CONTRAST BETWEEN AN ENGLISH DEAR-CORN FARMER, AND CHEAP-CORN FARMER.

(From Cobbett's Weekly Register.)

Of all two-legged creatures, none